



Issues from the 2017 Public Involvement Effort – What we Heard and Our Response



By the close of the comment period on August 21, 2017, the Forest had received 58 comment letters. The information below highlights the ‘issues’ that we heard and our response to date. Many comments received were broad in nature, making it difficult to identify specific concerns. Therefore, we will continue to work with stakeholder groups and Cooperating Agencies to gain clarity and to demonstrate responsiveness to the issues.

- **The Proposed Action Should Include More Site-specificity:** The LaVA analysis area has been divided into analysis subunits to increase site-specificity, in terms of describing current conditions, and to enhance our ability to disclose analysis effects. During project implementation, site-specificity will be enhanced further through the use of project design criteria and completion of field checklists for individual treatments.
- **The Scope and Scale of Project is too Large:** Modifications to the Proposed Action could be warranted if effects analyses indicate unacceptable resource impacts could result from project implementation, at the scale currently proposed. If modifications are warranted, they will be identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and available for public review during the 45-day Draft EIS comment period.
- **A Range of Alternatives is Warranted for a Project of this Scope and Scale:** The Forest is considering modifications to the Proposed Action to address scoping issues, rather than developing separate alternatives, as allowed for at 36 CFR 220.5(e)(1). As an example, the Proposed Action has been modified to eliminate the 10 miles of permanent road construction proposed in the July 2017 Scoping Document.
- **Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) and Unroaded Areas Should be Protected:** The Forest is developing a list of Project Design Measures (PDMs) to ensure protection of IRA characteristics and values and protection of areas that have minimal road systems. The PDMs are being developed in conjunction with our Cooperating Agencies and will be available for public review during the 45-day Draft EIS comment period.
- **Proposed Action Road Estimates Should be Reduced:** The 10 miles of permanent road construction proposed in the July 2017 Scoping Document have been removed from the Proposed Action. While temporary road mile estimates have not been reduced, we have created a new Treatment Opportunity Area (TOA) Map that excludes temporary road construction in specific Forest Plan Management Areas (MAs). We are also developing PDMs to minimize the effects of temporary roads on other resources. Our intent is to use existing roads wherever possible to minimize the need for temporary road construction.
- **Additional Public Engagement is Warranted:** We understand that some members of the public did not feel adequately notified about the comment period for the Proposed Action. We are conducting public engagement sessions this month to increase public awareness and understanding of the project and are working with our Cooperating Agencies to develop future public engagement efforts. The next formal comment period associated with this project will be upon release of the Draft EIS (expected in May of 2018).



The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data it has available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, have represented features not in accurate geographic locations, etc. The Forest Service makes no expressed or implied warranty, including warranty of merchantability and fitness, with respect to the character, function, or capabilities of the data or their appropriateness for any user's purposes. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace this geospatial information based on new inventories, new or revised information, and if necessary in conjunction with other federal, state or local public agencies or the public in general as required by policy or regulation. Previous recipients of the products may not be notified unless required by policy or regulation. For more information, contact the Medicine Bow - Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland Supervisor's Office (2468 Jackson Street, Laramie, WY 82070, 307-745-2300).